Claims

1. A method of operating a mobile communications node which has at least two different interfaces for providing connectivity with first and second different communications networks respectively, and which is receiving data from a remote corresponding node via the first network, in which:

in response to a trigger, a SIP protocol related handover request is generated by the mobile node to initiate handover from the first network to the second network;

on completion of handover the first network interface is set to sleep mode; and

the initiation of sleep mode is synchronised with the cessation of the receipt of data packets via the first network.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 in which the trigger is a signal sent to the mobile node.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1 in which the trigger is a signal generated by the mobile node.

4. A method as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the handover request is sent from the mobile node to the corresponding node via the second network and the initiation of sleep mode is synchronised with the mobile node receiving an acknowledgement message from the corresponding node.

5. A method as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the handover request is sent from the mobile node to the corresponding node via the second network, an acknowledgement message is sent from the mobile node to the corresponding node in response to an acknowledgement message returned from the corresponding node, and the initiation of sleep mode for the first network interface is synchronised with the sending of the acknowledgement message by the mobile node.

6. A method as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the sleep mode for the first network terminal is initiated in response to a marker in the received data stream indicating that the stream via the first network has come to an end.

7. A method as claimed in any preceding claim in which one of the first and second networks is a UMTS network and the other is a wireless local area network.

8. A method of routing data packets in a mobile communications system including a mobile communications node as claimed in any preceding claim sending or receiving data packets to/from a corresponding node, in which just prior to re routing packets to the mobile node, the corresponding node is caused to mark the data stream to indicate to the mobile node that the data stream via the first network has come to an end.

9. A method as claimed in claim 8 in which the corresponding node marks the last or last few packets transmitted over the first network.

10. A method as claimed in claim 9 in which the mark for each packet is embedded in the packet header field.

11. A method as claimed in claim 8, 9 or 10 in which the handover request is sent from the mobile node to the corresponding node via the second network, an acknowledgement message is sent from the mobile node to the corresponding node in response to a message returned from the corresponding node and the corresponding node commences sending packets to the mobile node via the second network in response to the acknowledgement message.

12. A computer program product for installation in a mobile communications node, which mobile node has at least two different interfaces for providing connectivity with first and second different communications networks respectively whereby when the mobile node is receiving data from a remote corresponding node the data stream can be handed over from one network to the other, the program when installed enabling the mobile node to set to sleep mode the interface for the first network following handover to the second network in synchronisation with the cessation of the receipt of data packets via the first network.

13. A computer program product as claimed in claim 12 which enables the mobile node to initiate sleep mode for the first network interface in response to a marker in the received data stream indicating that the stream via the first network has come to an end.

14. A computer program product as claimed in claim 12 which enables the mobile node to synchronise initiation of sleep mode for the first network interface with the sending of a handover acknowledgement message from the mobile node to the corresponding node.